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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/970,910	10/04/2001	Laurie E. Gathman	US 010497	1828

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PHILIPS INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY & STANDARDS
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EXAMINER

BASHORE, ALAIN L

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3624

DATE MAILED: 07/07/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/970,910

Applicant(s)

GATHMAN ET AL.

Examiner

Alain L. Bashore

Art Unit

3624

HLS

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 March 2002 and 04 October 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-28 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-28 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>3 and 4</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claims 13, 16-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 16-23 recite "system" which is vague and indefinite since a system may be one of several different statutory classes of invention (including a method or an apparatus). Applicant must indicate on the record what statutory class of invention the system claims belong to. For the purposes of this examination these claims are considered apparatus.

Claim 24 is confusing as currently written. It is not clear what "the exchange" refers to (i.e. physical exchange of physical seats?), "patron" refers to (i.e. patron of something other than the recited public facility?), if there is recited a one-to-one correspondence (i.e. a seat of one patron swapped for a seat of another?). The claim will be interpreted as best understood.

Claim 13 includes a recitation of "charhing".

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

3. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

4. Claims 1-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 as non-statutory because the method claims as presented do not claim a technological basis. Without a claimed basis, the claim may be interpreted in an alternative as involving no more than a manipulation of an abstract idea and therefore non-statutory under 35 U.S.C. 101. In contrast, a method claim that includes in the preamble and body of the claim structural / functional interrelationships that are solely by computer (and non-trivial) are considered to have a technological basis [See Ex parte Bowman, 61 USPQ2d 1669, 1671 (Bd. Pat. App. & Inter. 2001) – used only for content and reasoning since not precedential].

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 1-16, 18-24, 26-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nakfoor in view of Walker et al (207).

Nakfoor discloses providing an electronic ticket control system for issuing virtual tickets to public-facility patrons through virtual ticket devices where there is received virtual ticket exchange requests from a plurality of virtual ticket devices (fig 1). The exchange requests are stored in a database and analyzed to determine if any are eligible for exchange and the virtual tickets are updated with a validity check performed (col 3, lines 30-67; col 4, lines 1-6; col 5, lines 30-40) and incentives are disclosed (col 4, lines 51-57). A fee is also disclosed by Nakfoor (col 5, lines 18-20).

Since both parties of the secondary market are disclosed are customers to Nakfoor, they are therefore patrons for the purpose of claim interpretation.

Regarding claim 24, Nakfoor discloses electronically brokering the exchange of seats (as the tickets represent seat attendance/occupancy itself) of patrons at a public facility.

Nakfoor does not explicitly disclose:

sending an exchange notification message and receiving an exchange confirmation message;

an exchange of seats between patrons (where each patron receives the seat of another patron, i.e. a swap) as claim 24 is currently interpreted.

Walker et al (207) discloses sending an exchange notification message and receiving an exchange confirmation message (col 19, lines 55-60) and the use of swaps between parties (col 30, lines 30-39).

It would have been obvious to one with ordinary skill in the art to include sending an exchange notification message and receiving an exchange confirmation message because Walker et al (209) discloses legally binding steps required in transactions (col 19, lines 63-65).

It would have been obvious to one with ordinary skill in the art to include an exchange of seats between patrons because Walker et al (209) teaches a barter environment may occur in transactions between parties per se (col 30, line 31-32).

7. Claims 17, 25, and 28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nakfoor in view of Walker et al (207) as applied to claims above, and further in view of Peters.

Nakfoor and Walker et al (207) do not disclose providing the patrons images of views from seats available for exchange or prioritizing ticket exchange requests.

Senga discloses providing the patrons images of views from seats available for exchange (para 0116) and prioritizing ticket exchange requests (para 0050).

It would have been obvious to one with ordinary skill in the art to include providing the patrons images of views from seats available for exchange because Peters teaches ticket acceptability is dependent on seating location and view ability (col 13, lines 2-3).

It would have been obvious to one with ordinary skill in the art to include prioritizing ticket exchange requests because Senga teaches priority of importance to commodities (para 0022)

Specification

8. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities: the cross-reference to related applications has not been correctly described. Each application must be described with current patent serial number and current status.

Appropriate correction is required.

Conclusion

9. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

10. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Alain L. Bashore whose telephone number is 703-308-1884. The examiner can normally be reached on about 7:00 am to 4:30 pm (Monday thru Thursday).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Vincent Millin can be reached on 703-308-1065. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Alain L. Bashore